



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

Governor Charles D. Baker
Lt. Governor Karyn E. Polito
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Baker-Polito Administration Announces 2015 Recreational Trail Grants *30 Community Projects to Receive Over \$800,000 in Grants*

Boston – September 14, 2015 – The Baker-Polito Administration today announced that 30 projects located in several Massachusetts communities have been awarded Recreational Trail Grants (RTP) totaling \$820,982.80, continuing the administration's commitment to provide outdoor recreational opportunities for the citizens of the Commonwealth. The grants, which serve as a vital funding source for local hiking, biking and recreational vehicle trails in need of improvements and/or repairs, range from nearly \$5,000 to over \$50,000 depending on the scope of the project.

"The Commonwealth has an expansive system of recreational trails that provide great experiences and opportunities for both residents and visitors alike," **said Governor Charlie Baker**. "Through our partnership with local communities and non-profit organizations, these grants will provide the public greater access to safe, clean and fun recreational opportunities throughout the state."

"The Recreational Trail Grants are incredibly important to the funding of a wide variety of trails across the Commonwealth," **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. "These projects will promote healthy, active lifestyles and provide opportunities for citizens in urban, suburban and rural areas to enjoy the natural beauty of the Commonwealth."

RTP grants are awarded for the construction and maintenance of a variety of trails that include hiking trails, bikeways, snowmobile and off-road vehicle trails, and several others throughout the Commonwealth. The grants can be used to improve long-distance trails and rail trail development, ATV trail maintenance, and the creation or maintenance of municipal trails. Each recipient matches their grant with a minimum additional 20 percent in funding or in-kind services. This year's matching funds totaled \$539,034.

"These projects help revitalize and improve recreational trails across the state, from Great Barrington to New Bedford," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton**. "The Baker-Polito Administration is dedicated to working closely with local communities and organizations to ensure increased access to outdoor recreational opportunities."

"The recreational trail grants will go a long way to providing enhanced access to the innumerable outdoor opportunities the Commonwealth has to offer," **said MassDOT Secretary & CEO Stephanie Pollack**. "I have seen first-hand how investments in assets like rail trails can help to strengthen quality of life and serve as a viable transportation choice for people getting to and from work, and I'm happy to see these grants ensure our recreational assets do not go unnoticed as well."

"From trail maintenance and erosion mitigation to increased safety and accessibility measures, this year's Recreational Trail Grants will ensure Massachusetts state parks and forests will remain available for all citizens of the Commonwealth to enjoy," **said DCR Commissioner Carol Sanchez.**

Funding for the RTP Grants is made possible by the US Department of Transportation and the Federal Surface Transportation Act, in partnership with MassDOT, with funds coming directly from the motor fuel excise tax on off-road vehicles including ATV's and snowmobiles. All applications were reviewed by the Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board (MARTAB), an independent volunteer board appointed by the DCR Commissioner that is tasked with reviewing and recommending RTP grant proposals. The grants are intended to enable DCR, local communities, and volunteer organizations to make improvements to recreational trails in their areas.

"These grants will enhance opportunities for people to enjoy Massachusetts' wonderful natural resources and provide places for communities to come together," **said House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo.** "I thank the Baker Administration and look forward to seeing the new trails first hand."

"These grants will be instrumental in the improvement of Bradley Palmer and the Willowdale State Forest," **said State Representative Brad Hill.** "As a representative of the Fourth Essex District, I have partnered with the Essex Trail Association in the past and have full faith that they will improve access and recreation in our parks."

To meet their obligation of funding at least 20 percent of a project in order to receive an RTP grant, an organization may utilize a variety of methods, including in-kind labor and professional services, material donations, use of equipment or a cash match. RTP allocates 30 percent of its funds for motorized use, 30 percent for non-motorized use, and 40 percent for diverse use projects. Funding is available to registered non-profits and municipal, state, and federal agencies. This money has been matched by over \$500,000 in local contributions of cash, in-kind labor, and donations.

"These grants will propel state and local partnerships in such a way as to make it more likely that people can enjoy and use the outstanding land features that our state has," **said Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr.** "The projects that are receiving funds will also generate many opportunities for people to volunteer their own time and effort to complete and maintain these trails, we all benefit when more people are involved with conserving our natural resources."

"I am pleased that DCR has awarded this grant to the town of Needham for the Bay Colony Trail," **said State Senator Mike Rush.** "This funding will assist the town in continuing with their open space and recreational plans for the benefit of all the residents of Needham and surrounding communities."

This year's awardees are:

Community: Athol

Applying Organization: Town of Athol

Grant Award: \$26,379

This project involves the purchase and installation of a removable floating accessible dock/kayak launch on the Millers River in Athol. It will be located adjacent to the current trail access and car-top boat launch. In addition, the project will include re-grading and installation of stone dust material to make the existing trail to the river more accessible.

Community: Belchertown

Applying Organization: Mill Valley Snowmobile Club

Grant Award: \$12,532

This project will purchase new grooming drags in order to update an aging fleet of groomers. The project will provide grooming on snowmobile trails through the winter months in Belchertown and the surrounding area.

Community: Belmont

Applying Organization: Massachusetts Audubon Society

Grant Award: \$14,676

This project will create a sensory trail that will add multi-sensory interpretive content to a new all-persons accessible nature trail at the Habitat Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary. Interpretive elements will be added with the goal of creating a richer experience for visitors with a wide range of vision, cognitive, and mobility levels.

Community: Cambridge

Applying Organization: Charles River Conservancy

Grant Award: \$4,933

This project will engage volunteers in a variety of stewardship projects along the Charles River through the Charles River Conservancy Volunteer Program. The projects will focus on parkland aesthetics while promoting active outdoor recreation and increasing ecological stewardship.

Community: Cheshire

Applying Organization: Department of Conservation and Recreation

Grant Award: \$10,778

This project will fund a seasonal Appalachian Trail Ridge Runner who will work exclusively on the National Scenic Appalachian Trail in Massachusetts. The AT Ridge Runner provides education and information to trail visitors and works closely with numerous volunteers to help maintain the trail and its associated overnight facilities. The Ridge Runner also helps to monitor trail conditions, record trail use, and respond to emergencies as needed.

Community: Chesterfield

Applying Organization: Chesterfield 4-Seasons Club

Grant Award: \$20,745

This project will purchase a new storage building for the club's snowmobile equipment as well as local emergency equipment. The project will also involve the reclamation of two historical sites in the Chesterfield Gorge, including clearing of undergrowth and installation of interpretive signage.

Community: Acton & Maynard

Applying Organization: OARS, Inc.

Grant Award: \$25,920

Part of the OARS long term effort to create an Assabet River Blue and Green Trail along the full length of the river, this project will improve boating access, and connections and walking trails along the Acton and Maynard sections of the river. Improved signage for existing boat access points, as well as updated electronic and print versions of the "Assabet River Pocket Guide" are also a part of this project, with the intent of encouraging boating and hiking, legal boating access, safe passage around dams, improved handicap access, and safe and legal recreation on connected walking trails along the water's edge.

Community: Conway

Applying Organization: Conway Snowmobile Club

Grant Award \$23,893

This project will purchase needed equipment for snowmobile trail maintenance and grooming in the greater Conway snowmobile trail use area.

Community: Groton

Applying Organization: Town of Groton

Grant Award: \$24,135

The proposed 0.22 mile Nashua River Accessible Trail will provide access for people of all abilities to a peaceful forest experience with views of the Nashua River and one of its oxbow ponds. The grant project will include construction of a parking area for handicapped vehicles, two resting/viewing areas along the trail with concrete benches, and a terminus overlooking the oxbow pond with benches and a handicapped accessible table.

Community: Hadley

Applying Organization: Hadley Snowmobile Club

Grant Award: \$9,375

This project will purchase needed equipment for snow grooming and the maintenance of snowmobile trails in Hadley and the surrounding area.

Community: Hamilton & Ipswich

Applying Organization: Essex County Trail Association

Grant Award: \$39,880

This project will improve a series of trails in Bradley Palmer State Park and Willowdale State Forest. The project involves drainage improvements, repair and stabilization of eroded trails, and signage installation.

Community: Harvard

Applying Organization: Fruitlands Museum

Grant Award: \$14,730

This project will widen and improve portions of the Fruitlands Museum's trail system to allow motorized Gator Access, allowing individuals with mobility impairments the ability to enjoy the Museum trail system. The project will also fund new interpretive signage related to archaeological sites along the trails. These two initiatives aim to encourage greater public access to the museum's natural and cultural resources.

Community: Lunenburg

Applying Organization: Lunenburg Snow Riders

Grant Award: \$34,800

This project will purchase needed snow grooming equipment to service Lunenburg recreational trails and the surrounding area. In partnership with the Town of Lunenburg, the project will also construct a parking area at a recently acquired parcel of land in Lunenburg. The partnership will make additional improvements to the parcel through the construction of six bridges, improvements to the existing trail tread, and the installation of trail markers.

Community: Marshfield

Applying Organization: Wildlands Trust

Grant Award: \$11,900

This project involves trail restoration and public access improvements at the Hoyt-Hall Preserve in Marshfield. This project will improve the visitor experience, bring attention to natural and cultural resources, and encourage recreational trail use and healthy lifestyle choices by providing important trail linkages on town-owned open space.

Community: Mendon**Applying Organization: Bay State Trail Riders Association (BSTRA)****Grant Award: \$29,566**

In coordination with the Town of Mendon and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, BSTRA will improve a 0.7 mile section of the Quissett Trail Loop. This section is in great need of improvements, especially with regards to wet areas with poor drainage that require upgrades, and the resurfacing of the trail once those issues are addressed.

Community: Montague**Applying Organization: City of Montague Planning and Conservation Department****Grant Award: \$6,400**

This project will facilitate public recreational access to the Dry Hill Cemetery, which is Montague's first known cemetery and resting place of at least one Revolutionary War Soldier. The cemetery is unmaintained and unmarked, and this grant would support the construction of two trailhead facilities, trail markings, and an interpretive kiosk so that the public may enjoy both the cemetery, as well as the protected woodland on Dry Hill.

Community: Needham**Applying Organization: The Town of Needham****Grant Award: \$50,000**

This project will fund the construction of a 1.7-mile accessible trail through the Town of Needham. The Bay Colony Rail Trail will connect several areas of open space within the town and provide a safe, off-road trail available for residents of the town and neighboring communities. This portion of the trail will eventually be a link to a regional trail proposed through Needham, Newton, Dover, and Medfield.

Community: New Bedford**Applying Organization: City of New Bedford****Grant Award \$22,893**

This project will rehabilitate and restore The Ross C. Mathieu Nature Trail. Tasks will include general trail clearing, restoration of boardwalks, and the installation of interpretive signage. This project will also add a trail that will be used as a Safe Routes to School trail.

Community: Northampton**Applying Organization: Broad Brook Coalition****Grant Award: \$40,000**

This project will replace a bridge that serves as the gateway to the trail system of the Fitzgerald Lake Conservation Area, and will rehabilitate and extend a boardwalk and dock that provides access to freshwater marsh and the lake.

Community: Northampton**Applying Organization: Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board (MARTAB)****Grant Award: \$35,058.80**

RTP Education Funds are reserved for the operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental programs as those objectives relate to recreational trails. Applications for education projects are received and considered on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

Community: North Adams**Applying Organization: Appalachian Mountain Club****Grant Award: \$36,847**

This project will work to reconstruct a trail along a steep section of the Appalachian Trail at Mt. Prospect. The work will be done by the AMC Berkshire Teen Crew and involves the construction of switchbacks at sustainable grades and re-routing of the existing trail.

Community: Pittsfield

Applying Organization: Berkshire Snow Seekers Snowmobile Club

Grant Award: \$12,000

This project will involve the restoration of badly eroded sections of snowmobile trails in October Mountain State Forest by removing large rocks and improving trail drainage structures. This will provide for long-term safety and trail stability along the snowmobile trail system in all seasons.

Community: Pittsfield

Applying Organization: Department of Conservation and Recreation

Grant Award: \$50,038

This project will provide a trail siting, construction and maintenance crew to exclusively focus on OHV trails at DCR's Western Region lands, where the majority of trails that are open to motorized use are located.

Community: Pittsfield

Applying Organization: Department of Conservation and Recreation

Grant Award: \$57,263

This ongoing trail project involves the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the backbone of the Pittsfield State Forest OHV trail system, the Skyline Trail. The project will also restore large portions of discontinued trail, extend the OHV trail system to a new, appropriate parking area and access point, and provide a safer and more enjoyable riding experience overall.

Community: Revere

Applying Organization: Bike to the Sea, Inc.

Grant Award: \$49,362

This project will assist in the completion of a one-mile segment of the Northern Strand Community Trail in North Revere. Grant funding will provide safety improvements to a roadway crossing, materials to cap and stabilize exposed railroad soils, and finish surfacing along a section of the trail.

Community: Savoy

Applying Organization: Savoy Kanary Kats Snowmobile Club

Grant Award: \$33,869

This project will purchase new snowmobile trail grooming equipment to service the area of Savoy, Hawley, Plainfield, and Windsor.

Community: Southbridge

Applying Organization: Town of Southbridge Trails Committee

Grant Award: \$50,050

This project will improve the surface section of the Quinebaug Valley Rail Trail in Southbridge. It will also involve the repair of a small section of an eroded river bank along the trail, which will improve trail conditions overall.

Community: Southampton & Easthampton

Applying Organization: The Towns of Southampton and Easthampton, and the Pascommuck Conservation Trust

Grant Award: \$50,000

This project will fund a new bridge over the Manhan River, which will connect the trail systems of Easthampton and Southampton. The project will also fund the construction of a parking area for trail users at the Whittemore Property in Southampton.

Community: Sudbury
Applying Organization: Sudbury Valley Trustees
Grant Award: \$10,960

This project will fund the printing of 40 property-specific trail map brochures, to be distributed among the properties managed by the Sudbury Valley Trustees and at other key locations in the surrounding communities.

Community: Wheelwright (Harwick)
Applying Organization: East Quabbin Land Trust
Grant Award: \$12,000

This project will continue the work of the East Quabbin Land Trust and their focus on the construction of the Mass Central Rail Trail by completing trail bed improvements, installing welcome signage, and creating a loop trail on adjacent conservation land in the town of Wheelwright.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Carol Sanchez, the agency’s mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.

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